

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3134

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PI5, UV

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT LAMIZANA'S PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: OUAGADOUGOU 0162

1. DURING PRESS CONFERENCE JANUARY 24, PRESIDENT LAMIZANA ANSWERED QUESTIONS ON FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT AND ON NEXT STEPS FOR RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF ANSWERS GIVEN BY PRESIDENT TO THE PRESS.

2. EXCLUSION OF M.L. N. FROM NEW GOVERNMENT:

PRESIDENT STATED THAT HE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO HAVE ALL POLITICAL OPINIONS REPRESENTED IN GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNION. HE DENIED THAT MLN HAD BEEN EXCLUDED FROM GOVERNMENT OR THAT IT HAD REFUSED TO PARTICIPATE.

MLN SIMPLY INSISTED ON CERTAIN CONDITIONS WHICH

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WERE NOT ACCEPTABLE.

3. TIME-TABLE FOR RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE:

PRESIDENT CONFIRMED THAT NATIONAL REFERENDUM ON NEW CONSTITUTION WOULD BE HELD DURING SECOND QUARTER OF 1977 AND PRESIDENTIAL AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS DURING LAST QUARTER OF 1977.

4. FORMATION OF SEPARATIST MOVEMENT IN BOBO REGION:

A REPORTER ASKED PRESIDENT IF HE HAD HEARD OF THE M.A.O. (MOUVEMENT AUTONOMISTE DE L'OUEST) WHICH REPORTEDLY WANTS TO FORM A NEW REPUBLIC OF KENEDOUGOU. PRBSIDENT SAID HE HAD NEVER HEARD OF IT BUT THAT REPUBLIC OF UPPER VOLTA WAS ONE AND INDIVISIBLE AND THAT HE WOULD NOT TOLERATE ANY SEPARTIST ACTIVITIES. (COMMENT: NO ONE HERE, NOT EVEN FRENCH AMBASSADOR WHO IS WELL INFORMED ON POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN BOBO DQULASSO REGION, HAS HEARD OF THE ALLEGED FORMATION OF THIS MOVEMENT.)

5. "LE MONDE" ARTICLES OF JANUARY 16-17: A REPORTER REFERRED TO RECENT ARTICLES BY PHILIPPE DECRAENE IN THE FRENCA DAILY "LE MONDE" WHICH GAVE IMPRESSION OF CRITICIZING LAMIZANA'S WEAKNESS DURING FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT AND SEEMED TO PROMOTE CANDIDACY OF FORMER PRESIDENT MAURICE YAMEGGO. REPORTER ASKED LAMIZANA SPECIFICALLY WHETHER IT WAS TRUE,AS REPORTED BY DECRAENE, THAT HE PLANNED TO RESIGN AT THE END OF 1977 FROM BOTH THE PRESIDENCY AND THE ARMY. LAMIZANA SIDE-STEPPED THE QUESTION AND STATED THAT IN A COUNTRY LIKE UPPER VOLTA, WHERE THERE IS FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION, IT IS INEVITABLE THAT SPECULATIONS WILL RUN WILD. TO THE QUESTION WHETHER EX-PRESIDENT MAURICE YAMEOGO WOULD BE REHABILITATED IN HIS CIVIL RIGHTS BEFORE OR AFTER THE ELECTIONS, THE PRESIDENT REPLIED THAT THIS WAS ONE OF THE PROBLEMS FOR WHICH HE WOULD HAVE TO FIND A SOLUTION "IN DUE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TIME". COMMENT: PRESIDENT LAMIZANA WAS REPORTEDLY FURIOUS AT THE DECRAENE ARTICLES AND TOLD SEVERAL OF HIS COLLABORATORS THAT HE DEEPLY REGRETTEED HAVING RECEIVED DECRAENE DURING HIS VISIT TO UPPER VOLTA). GRAHAM

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